

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Dependent claims 2, 4, 10, 11, 14, 17, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32, and 39 have been indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Independent claims 1, 6, 15, 22, 28, and 38, as well as dependent claims 3, 5-9, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 24, 26, 30, 33, and 34, however, have been rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,416,939 (Maalouli). Although many of the dependent claims have been indicated to contain allowable subject matter, applicants have amended the independent claims to more clearly define their invention over Maalouli.

Applicant's invention includes a patient positioning device that moves a patient into a supine position, as shown by comparing Figures 2 and 3, so that the patient is ready to receive traction or treatment to the patient's back,. Figure 3 shows the device situated on a bed or treatment table in a lowered position, and Figure 2 shows the device moved to the supine position. As shown in Figure 3, in the lowered position, the patient's lower legs rest on the device's leg support 30 and the patient's back rests on the bed or treatment table. In contrast, Figure 2 shows the patient moved to the supine position in which the patient's lower legs have been controllably moved by the patient positioning device to an elevated position that is substantially parallel to the patient's spine, the patient's back is resting on the treatment table or bed, and the patient's upper legs have moved into an angular relationship with the lower legs and the back. One benefit of the patient positioning device of this invention is that it provides a controlled movement of a patient into the supine position, such that the patient's lower legs and back are substantially parallel while the lower legs are being moved.

Maalouli does not anticipate the claims because it does not have structure for moving a patient into the supine position. In fact, Maalouli teaches a tilting bed apparatus for

elevating “an individual’s *feet relative to the head portion* of the individual” (Maalouli Col. 1, lns. 8-9) (emphasis added). Essentially, Maalouli discloses a device as shown in Figures 1 and 2 for moving a person’s feet to an inclined position. Maalouli does not disclose a device for moving a patient into a supine position as set forth in the claims such that the patient is ready to receive back treatment. Thus, Maalouli lacks at least the following elements of each set of claims:

Claims 1-5:

an actuator, coupled to the vertical support member, which the motor powers to push the vertical support member and rotate the leg support and the patient’s lower legs from a lowered position to an elevated position, such that the patient is moved to a supine position that includes the patient’s lower legs being elevated and substantially parallel to the patient’s spine and the patient’s upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient’s lower legs and back.

Claims 6-14:

a means for rotating the leg support and the person’s lower legs about the pivot from the lowered position to the elevated position, in which the person is in a supine position that includes the patient’s lower legs being elevated and substantially parallel to the patient’s spine and the patient’s upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient’s lower legs and back.

Claims: 15-21:

a linkage that connects the base to the leg support and that rotates the leg support and the patients lower legs from a lowered position to an elevated position, in which the patient is in a supine position that includes the patient’s lower legs being elevated and substantially parallel to the spine and the patient’s upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient’s lower legs and back.

Claims 22-27:

a motor that rotates the leg support about the pivot from a lowered position to an elevated position, in which the patient is in a supine position that includes the patient’s lower legs being elevated and substantially parallel to the patient’s spine and the patient’s upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient’s lower legs and back.

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Claims 28-34:


an actuator, coupled to the linkage, which pushes the linkage and the lower leg support to rotate from a lowered position to an elevated position, in which the patient is in a supine position that includes the patient's lower legs being elevated in an attitude substantially parallel to the patient's spine and the patient's upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient's lower legs and back.

Claims 38-39:

powering a motor which powers an actuator to move the leg cushion from a lowered position to an elevated position, in which the patient is in a supine position that includes the patient's lower legs being elevated in an attitude substantially parallel to the patient's spine and the patient's upper legs being disposed in an angular relationship with the patient's lower legs and back.

Applicants believe that the foregoing constitutes a full and complete response to the office action and respectfully requests a notice of allowance.

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